

Oral Questions

Steel Wares for the major appliance division of Westinghouse Canada and use of the Westinghouse name?

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, I have met personally during the last five days with all the major participants in this particular transaction, namely, White Incorporated, Westinghouse Canada and Westinghouse U.S. as well as with GSW. All these meetings were designed to bring about some sort of satisfactory settlement which would be protective of the jobs and the industry in Hamilton. I would ask the hon. member to appreciate that there is a certain degree of confidentiality attached to these matters and I think it would be detrimental if I were to breach it now. But I can say to him that meetings between the parties will be continuing, I believe on Tuesday of next week, and that in the meantime we remain ready to offer our good offices in any way we can. The parties are now talking among themselves, which was not the case a week ago.

Mr. Kempling: I thank the minister for that reply. I appreciate that the negotiations are confidential and I would not wish to prejudice the outcome. Can the minister advise us whether a further extension of the November 8 closing date has been negotiated with General Steel Wares and Westinghouse Canada if it would assist in bringing the matter to an acceptable conclusion.

Mr. Jamieson: I discussed this matter first thing this morning and my answer to the hon. member is this: since the parties have agreed to hold discussions next Tuesday I would regard it as being a natural assumption that there is a continuity of the arrangement.

* * *

INDIAN AFFAIRS**SETTLEMENT OF NATIVE LAND CLAIMS—PARTICIPATION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA**

Mr. Hugh A. Anderson (Comox-Alberni): May I direct a question to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Mr. Speaker? Can the hon. gentleman, with his stated willingness to negotiate and extinguish native land claims in British Columbia, advise the House whether the government of British Columbia has belatedly realized that any settlement of land claims would require their participation, and, second, can he tell the House whether any concrete progress has been made in negotiations with British Columbia regarding the land settlement problem?

Hon. Judd Buchanan (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): The answer to the first part of the question is, no. The Province of British Columbia has not accepted the fact that it has a role to play. In answer to the second part of the question, I had a good meeting with provincial ministers last May but since then they have been indicating that there is just no movement on the thing and we are making no headway whatsoever.

[Mr. Kempling.]

PUBLIC SERVICE**REASON FOR DELAY IN APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY MINISTER OF DEPARTMENT OF SECRETARY OF STATE**

Mr. R. Gordon L. Fairweather (Fundy-Royal): Mr. Speaker, my question is addressed to the Prime Minister. When will a deputy minister be appointed to the Department of the Secretary of State and what are the considerations which have led the government to leave this position vacant for up to seven months?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): The answer to the second part of the question is that the acting deputy minister, the assistant deputy ministers, are doing a good job and they know they will be assisted soon by a permanent deputy minister.

* * *

FINANCE**REQUEST FOR ASSURANCE SOCIAL PROGRAMS NOT CUT UNTIL OTHER BUDGETARY CUTS MADE**

Mr. Heward Grafftey (Brome-Missisquoi): Mr. Speaker, in answer to my question two days ago, the Minister of Finance said that prior to presenting a new budget there would be cuts in social programs to fight inflation. I now ask him whether he can assure the House that there will be no cuts in vital social programs until there have been budgetary cuts by eliminating waste, inefficiency and duplication in other programs—

Mr. Baldwin: And extravagance; don't forget extravagance.

Mr. Grafftey:—and cancelling such services as Information Canada, general information services of the government and consulting fees?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Finance): The hon. gentleman will find if he looks back that I did not say social programs. I can assure him that the vital social programs which we have put forward, and which from time to time have been supported by hon. gentleman opposite, will be continued.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): I shall certainly bear in mind the various programs the hon. gentleman would like to see cut out, though as to his suggestion we might cut out information services, I would remind him that hon. members on the other side have often told us that the government is not giving enough information. However, the hon. member seems to hold an opposite view.

Mr. Baldwin: We want the truth!

Mr. Grafftey: A supplementary question. I must say I read the minister's statement of two days ago and it was reported that social programs would be cut.

Some hon. Members: Question!